

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

26 AUG 1975

The Honorable James B. Rhoads  
Chairman, Interagency Classification  
Review Committee  
National Archives and Records Service  
Washington, D.C. 20408

Dear Dr. Rhoads:

I have given careful consideration to your letter of July 22, 1975, regarding Professor Bunnell's appeal to the Interagency Classification Review Committee of CIA's denial of his request to declassify certain CIA intelligence documents.

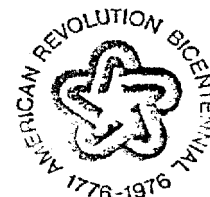
I would hope the ICRC could accept my assurance, herewith, that the documents involve information furnished by representatives of foreign governments on the understanding that it be held in confidence. As you know, the Executive order provides that such information is not to be declassified.

Inherent in our effort to protect our confidential relationships with foreign intelligence services is our ability to assure these organizations that the Agency has the authority and ability to control and prevent the release of information furnished to us. Although the current public interest in CIA and the attendant publicity, together with the Freedom of Information Act and other factors, seriously aggravate our ability in this regard, the Committee's willingness to accept my assurance and to uphold our denial decision would greatly aid us in our efforts to maintain these confidential and highly valuable relationships with foreign intelligence services. The question is not the sensitivity of the substance of the material in these reports, the question is whether other nations' intelligence services will confide their material to us if we release it by a national review rather than respect its secrecy because of the confidence in which it was given us.

In view of the responsibilities assigned to the ICRC by the National Security Council, I have authorized that the documents in question be made available to the Committee. In accordance with my statutory responsibility

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for the protection of intelligence sources and methods, I would appreciate you making appropriate arrangements whereby these documents can be reviewed for declassification personally by members of the ICRC and will not be disseminated elsewhere for review. I further request that all copies be returned to the CIA after the members complete their action.

Sincerely,

/s/ Vernon A. Walters

W. E. Colby  
Director

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[Redacted]

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